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CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM · LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO · PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

Volume 53 No. 23 December 1, 2021 suggested donation $1

FROM BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION TO STRIKING MINERS

FIGHT FOR WORKERS' POWER!

Miners need communism, not patriotism

NEW YORK CITY, November 4—Strikes and struggle marked this year's 104th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia, the first time the working class seized state power and freed millions of workers from capitalism and imperialism. On Thursday, November 4, hundreds of workers, miners, members of the communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP), and friends demonstrated in solidarity with the multiracial Alabama miners who continue their nearly eight month strike. On November 6, PL'ers and friends held an anniversary event in honor of the Bolshevik (revolutionary communists in Russia) Revolution, while also applauding the ongoing miners' strike. This was a multiracial social event connecting revolutionary history to present day reform struggles that displays our resolve to fight back amidst the growing imperialist threat of World War III.

These rallies and events were led by new comrades. They celebrate that even as capitalists try to keep their boots on the necks of the working class we are always preparing for a communist revolution. Sustained strikes and fightbacks are schools for communism and they teach us how to lead, organize, and support our fellow brothers and sisters. While the Alabama miners' strike is not the Bolshevik Revolution, in this dark night it reminds us that our fighting spirit is still burning.

Miners' rally: Union misleaders show their true colors

The November 4 rally in support of striking Alabama miners was called by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) president, Cecil Roberts, in front of the Manhattan headquarters of Warrior Met Coal's largest shareholder, BlackRock, a key capitalist asset management firm overseeing more than $14 trillion in investments. BlackRock is financially interlocked with top ruling class banks like Citigroup and JPMorgan Chase and is one of the largest shareholders in ExxonMobil. It owns billions of dollars in real estate in working class neighborhoods, and rounding out its portfolio are major investors in top U.S. and Israeli weapons makers.

On October 27 the courts issued a temporary restraining order on pickets at Warrior Met mines until November 15. The company released highly edited videos of strikers defending themselves and their jobs on the picket line to make it look like they attacked unprovoked. In reality, Warrior Met has been attacking strikers with vehicles and sending scabs across the picket line with KKKop escorts.

Members of unions such as CUNY's Professional Staff Congress, the National Writers Union, airline and hotel workers' unions also attended and with them a group of PL'ers and friends. While PL'ers sold CHALLENGE and spoke with miners about revolution, the UMWA president tried whipping up nationalism saying miners are "real American patriots." He explained that the UMWA's strategy to win the strike hinges on convincing Warrior Met and BlackRock to 'also be patriots' and 'do the right thing' by agreeing to their contract demands. Finally, he asked the crowd to face the U.S. flag

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SCAN ME

OUR FIGHT

✯Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✯The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✯Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✯While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✯Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

✯Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✯Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✯Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✯Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✯Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. 1 issue $1. One Year: $20. Six months: $15. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO Box 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202, December 1, 2021•Volume 53 No. 23

Editorial

COP26 conference

Capitalists don't cop to climate corruption

Over the 12 days of the climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland, fossil fuel companies extracted a billion barrels of oil from the ground. As diplomats tap-danced around the climate crisis, capitalists guaranteed that even more Earth-warming carbon would clog the atmosphere. Beneath their fake show of unity and pathetically inadequate (and unenforceable) pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the bosses did what bosses do. The COP26 conference was driven by the capitalist law of maximum profit and by the inter-imperialist rivalry heading toward global war. The only thing that unites the world's ruling classes is their need to build racism, sexism, nationalism, and fascism to prepare for that war. Only communist revolution, led by Progressive Labor Party (PLP), can save a habitable planet by putting science and workers' needs first.

Climate change and racist inequality

Though all workers are hurt by climate change, poor Black, Latin and Asian working-class areas suffer the most. An unprecedented drought in Madagascar has left more than one million people at risk of famine (U.N.,10/21). Rising sea levels in the Indian Ocean could erase the Maldive Islands within three generations (express.co.uk, 11/15/17). In the state of Bahia in northeastern Brazil, dried-out rivers are wiping out crops, drinking water, and farmers' jobs (Yale Environment 360, 11/10). In September, Hurricane Ida swept through New York City and killed 11 workers trapped in illegal basement apartments in working-class Asian neighborhoods—victims of both climate change and their landlords' greed. And let's not forget Hurricane Katrina, which in 2005 killed nearly 2,000 workers in New Orleans, 52 percent of them Black.

By far the worst is yet to come. By 2050, more than a billion workers could become climate refugees (theguardian.com, 9/9/20).

As the world burns, bosses jockey for profit

U.S. bosses are locked in a battle for markets and resources with their main imperialist rivals, China and Russia. There are trillions in potential profits in the shift to electric vehicles and clean energy sources like solar and wind. But there is also big money to be made today from dirty energy: coal, oil, and natural gas. From China and the U.S., the two worst emitters, to still-developing countries like India and Brazil, the capitalist rulers are slow-walking the transition to have it both ways. As a result, the 2030 pledges made in Glasgow would warm the globe by 2.7 degrees Celsius (or 3.7 degrees Fahrenheit)—far beyond the 1.5-degree limit set in Paris six years ago. It's a formula for even more powerful and frequent hurricanes, more deadly floods, more lethal heat waves and wildfires—for runaway climate disaster.

The emissions reduction goals set in Glasgow, said an official with the United Nations Environment Program chair, were "generally vague and untransparent; they are hard to calculate and hold to account; many kick the can beyond 2030, when we know that we need to halve our emissions between now and 2030 to be on track to limit warming to 1.5 C." Or as one climate policy analyst put it, COP26 "has a very big credibility gap" (Carbon Brief, 11/10).

Even as U.S. Hypocrite-in-Chief Joe Biden was pushing Saudi Arabia and Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to ease gas prices by pumping even more oil out of the ground (NPR, 10/31), he called out his imperialist counterparts, Russia's Vladimir Putin and China's Xi Jinping, for failing to show up in Glasgow (BBC, 11/2). Workers should see Biden's Russia- and China-bashing for what it is, a blatant attempt to build patriotic fervor for World War III—in other words, a deadly trap!

Big Fascists, big problems

According to a recent poll, 71 percent of young adults in the U.S. believe that climate change will harm them personally (Pew Research, September). The dominant finance capital wing of the U.S. ruling class is cynically trying to use the climate crisis to win support from workers who are desperate for real action. These liberal Big Fascists (See Glossary, p. 6) also know that fossil fuels are linked to extreme weather, massive crop damage, and the premature deaths and disability of millions of workers from heart and lung disease—all big hits to the bosses' bottom line. Hence the $1 trillion Biden bill and the proposed $555 billion climate package in his embattled Build Back Better plan.

The Big Fascists' problem is the disunity and lack of discipline within their own class. Small Fascist (See Glossary, p. 6) bosses like the Koch family, whose fortune was built on domestic oil, have led the charge to deny climate science and push back against regulations to limit carbon emissions. Mobilized by Donald Trump, the Small Fascists have hijacked the Republican Party, which stands unanimously opposed to Build Back Better, a mix of climate funding and some crumbs for social services. They have a staunch ally in Democratic Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia, a coal baron who has already gutted Biden's proposal to clean up the electric power sector and is now threatening to torpedo Build Back Better altogether (MSNBC, 10/19).

The Big Fascists also have deep problems within their own camp. ExxonMobil, the multinational oil company and finance capital kingpin, has been exposed for mounting a climate disinformation campaign on Facebook—and then lying about it to a Congressional committee (msn.com, 11/3). "Did we aggressively fight against some of the science?" a company lobbyist admitted in an interview covertly filmed by Greenpeace. "Yes. We were looking out for our investments. We were looking out for our shareholders" (CNN, 7/21).

For the liberal U.S. bosses, from Biden to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and her Green New Deal, the biggest lie of all is their shameless pose as protectors of the environment and humanity. This is the same crew that's planning a global war that will poison the atmosphere and slaughter untold millions of workers. Talk about toxic gases!

Only communist revolution can solve climate crisis

The hundred thousand protestors on the streets of Glasgow last week made it clear that the international working class sees through the bosses' empty words and phony shows of compassion. Most workers know instinctively that profit-driven capitalists can never solve the climate crisis. What they are missing is communist leadership and an analysis to turn the fight against carbon emissions into a fight for a world without money or racism or sexism or imperialist war. PLP works every day—on the job, in the schools, in our communities—to build a vision of a society run by and for the working class. Join us! Save the planet by smashing capitalism!✪

LA: to abolish the kkkops, abolish capitali$m

LOS ANGELES, November 17—After two years of being immersed in the mass movement against police terror, Progressive Labor Party (PLP) here has been connected with lots of people interested in abolishing the police. The kkkops, used to uphold and defend capitalism, will never be abolished under capitalism. We will need our Party to lead a violent revolution to overthrow this system. Only then can we abolish the police. At the suggestion of an impacted family member, we brought this understanding to 20 members of our base through an engaging forum.

PLP from its inception has been involved in the mass work against police terror. Over the decades, we have seen calls for reforms like more Black cops and mayors, more training for police, the need for body cameras, and more. Over that same period of time, workers have seen these various reforms implemented yet have no impact on the brutal nature of the killer cops. It has become harder and harder for the bosses to fool the working class into having confidence in reforming the police or the system. After the last year and a half of struggle, if someone tried to call for a basic reform like those mentioned above, they would be laughed off the street. People know changes that address the root of the problem are long overdue.

When the ideology of the working class shifts to the left, as it has since George Floyd was killed, it is no surprise that misleaders have attempted to co-opt the ideology and language of the masses. We see this especially with the liberal Democrats who remain the main danger to our class. To distinguish ourselves from these fake leftists and opportunists, we have to be able to combat their ideas.

Red book club

Our mass organization is starting a book club with the book *Becoming Abolitionists—Police, Protests, and the Pursuit of Freedom* by Derecka Purnell. The author, a Harvard Law School graduate, advocates for so-called "non-reformist reforms" and purports that these reforms over time can lead to the abolition of the police. Some abolitionists recognize the root cause of capitalism, but have a distorted view of the state. They claim that with these "radical" reforms, ultimately the bosses' state would "wither away."

What Purnell and other activists who are being used to mislead the working class are missing is the inescapable class antagonism that exists between bosses and workers. This very antagonism led to the creation of the bosses state and their police in the first place. The state is not neutral nor can we win power within their institutions. This class antagonism can only be resolved through communist revolution and a complete destruction of their state. It will then be supplanted with the dictatorship of the working class led by the international Progressive Labor Party.

Deep dive into abolition

To prepare to raise these ideas skillfully in our mass organization book club, we read and discussed excerpts from the book in one of our Party club meetings. This club includes impacted family members and other friends. It was clear to all who attended that not only was Purnell's path a dead end, but that we needed to present the Party's perspective on this to our broader base.

One seasoned comrade, one new comrade, and a close base member (a young Black healthcare worker) volunteered to plan the forum. We settled on presenting three parts to the forum - history and role of the police, historical examples of the shortcomings of abolition, and the Party's plan for how to abolish the police. We created folders with readings, guiding questions, and graphic organizers for attendees to use in their small group discussions and whole group share outs. Of the 20 base members who attended, almost all came from the mass organization that comrades have been active in or their on-the-job work that has successfully been connected to the anti-police violence work.

There were rich discussions guided by questions like "are abolitionists reformers or revolutionaries?", "how can revolution succeed where reforms and abolition cannot?", and "what do we need for the successful overthrow of capitalism?"

Participants recognized the shortcomings of abolition movements and gave numerous examples of where this has turned into its opposite. We read excerpts from an article that highlighted the rise in the treacherous convict lease system to guarantee free labor after the abolition of slavery.

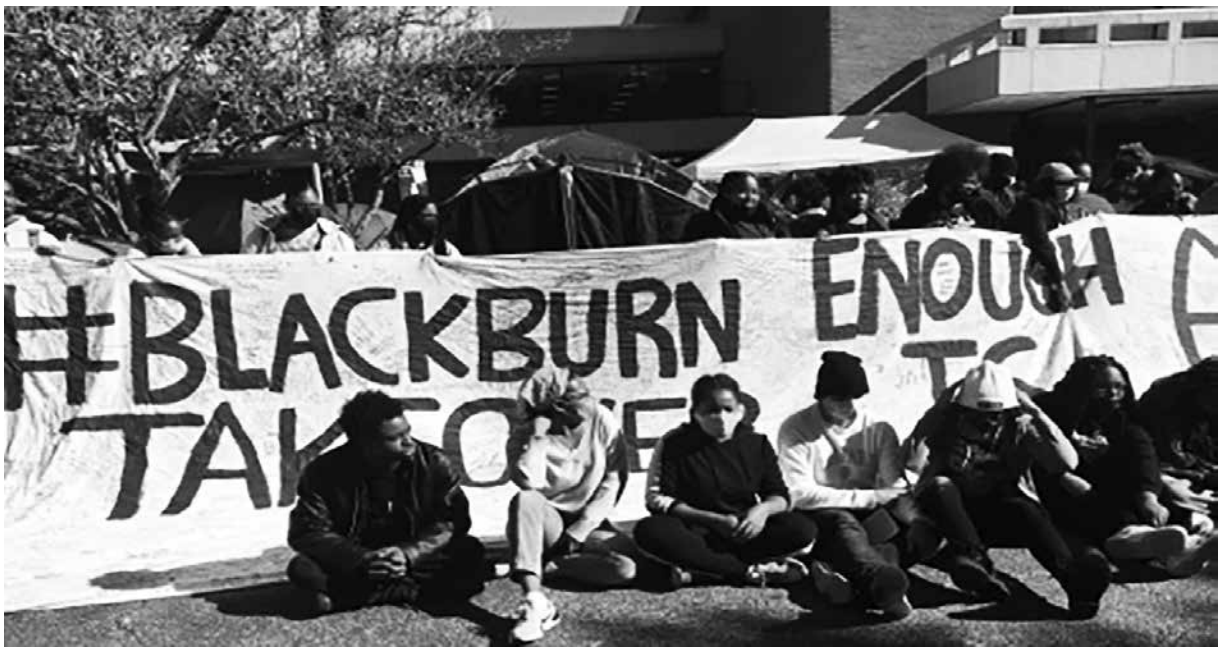
Even if the mass movement put enough pressure to "abolish" the police, the capitalist class would just reinstate them under a different name.

So what's the plan? Build PLP!

During the third segment where we focused on the Party's plan for abolishing the police—a revolutionary party to overthrow capitalism and create a communist world in its place — one base member raised doubts that the working class could shed its selfish nature for this new society to thrive. Another base member jumped right in and reminded him that so-called human nature is determined by the capitalist class, but when we have state power, workers would be that driving force.

Everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed the rich discussions. Many asked for a part two where we could dive deeper into a vision for communism. We will also follow up with a Party retreat that will call for those close to us to step up their commitment and join. Through our commitment to working in mass organizations and being active in the mass movement, our base of the Party in LA has grown both quantitatively and qualitatively. While there is still a ways to go to recruit and consolidate those closest to us, the potential absolutely exists and can be actualized if we all redouble our efforts and tighten our focus. Onward!✪

Howard students end occupation, need revolution!



Reforms are like trying to stop a burst pipe with a bandaid. Students need real and lasting change, they need communism!

WASHINGTON, DC, November 15— After a 34-day occupation that turned Howard University's Blackburn Center into a "tent city," Howard students forced the administration to "plan to find a resolution" to the campus's horrid, racist living and learning conditions.

It remains to be seen if the administration will fulfill its promises. When one of the organizers returned to her dorm, she found flooding from a broken pipe! Even in victory, reforms are limited under a nightmare system called capitalism! These deplorable conditions are "normal" because this system is built on profit, not working-class needs. At Howard, we have a Black President, Wayne A.I. Frederick, subjecting mainly Black students to deplorable housing conditions in a historically Black campus (HBCU).

Only communist revolution can create a society that meets the needs of workers and working class students.

Racist conditions at an HBCU

Students were fed up with mold, broken pipes, intermittent WIFI, and roaches in their dorms, and were also incensed at the administration's indifference to their plight (see CHALLENGE, October 23). Just last month, the university's own report listed 34 concerns related to "suspected fungal growth, across more than 5,050 beds-- 0.67% of all on-campus beds" (ABC News, 11/17).

The students demanded what would have never been an issue in the first place under a needs-based system—a) an in-person town hall with Howard's president, b) a meeting with university leaders about housing and legal, disciplinary and academic immunity for protesters, c) student voice in Howard's new housing plan, and more.

Support from faculty

Faculty and alumni rallied in support of the students during the occupation, which has come to be known as #BlackburnTakeover . On Friday, November 5, the adjunct faculty members organized in the SEIU union sponsored a support rally, linking their working conditions to the students' learning conditions.

Tenured faculty also spoke, one noting that their participation in negotiations with the adjunct faculty union was summarily canceled when the administration hired a union-busting lawyer to represent the university in these negotiations instead.

A Progressive Labor Party (PLP) member spoke of the need for revolution against the entire capitalist system, since the horrendous conditions facing students are a trickle-down from the entire racist exploitative system of which Howard University is a part. Alumni speakers recounted their own negative experiences with the administration, and set up a tent to join the protesters in their 24/7 occupation and tent city.

What was the victory?

After 20 whole days of negotiations with the administration, students felt their concerns had been met, on paper. "We came, we saw, we declared, and we won," claimed one of the organizers of the University's Blackburn Center occupation. What was the victory? What have we won? President Frederick "plans to make improvements throughout the campus, and is committed to maintaining 'safe and high-end housing'" (ABC News, 11/17). While they may make some improvements in housing, it remains locked in a process of gentrification as it sells off its properties to developers, forcing Black workers out of the city. There is no escaping the capitalist system, with profits primary, as long as we limit our vision to reforming our immediate circumstances.

Jesse Jackson and Ras Baraka visited the protesting students. The former is a historically Black misleader who functions as a pacifier against antiracist fightback. The latter is a leader of student rebellion at Howard in 1989 and current mayor of Newark responsible for racist policies! But these liberal reformers lead us to accept a system in decay. No matter how hard we try, we can't expect a tree with rotten roots to bear fruit.

Real victory against rotten daily conditions, racism, and capitalism can only come with the building of a revolutionary organization. Step up to fight in the class struggle today to build the long-term struggle for communism, the abolition of all forms of exploitation, and join the PLP!✪

Fighting spirit won't starve, workers won't stomach capitalist food deserts

CHICAGO, November 14– Progressive Labor Party (PLP) comrades have joined a working-class struggle against the racist closure of a local Aldi's supermarket in Garfield Park. During a global pandemic that has further strained food access across the country, this disgusting and racist assault against mostly Black workers shows that the bosses will happily let our class suffer.

Workers in the neighborhood and PLP, however, have banded together to ensure there is immediate action taken to care for our class brothers and sisters. We are also maintaining a long-term outlook that only a communist revolution will rid us of these capitalist cruelties.

Food deserts plague Black workers

Closing this store, the only source of fresh food in the area, creates yet another "food desert," a location lacking healthy eating options. It also exacerbates medical problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes among workers in the neighborhood. According to some estimates, at least half a million workers in Chicago – the majority of whom are Black – currently live within areas considered food deserts (Chicago Sun-Times, 11/9).

But as the global worker fightbacks currently happening show (see page 3), workers aren't going down so quietly! Shortly after the closure, some non-profit groups and health advocacy organizations protested at the Aldi headquarters during which they rightfully blasted the attack.

Local workers and organizations have also organized free distribution of fresh produce every Saturday in the parking lot for workers in the neighborhood. These actions should be applauded and they display that even in the darkest night confidence in the working class can never be overstated. These actions have presented a strong opening for an infusion of communist politics and leadership to ensure food insecurity forever becomes history for all workers.

When bosses starve us, workers provide

The closing of the Aldi store in Garfield Park came as a shock to practically everybody. It was literally open one day and closed the next. A PLP member who works in a nearby neighborhood got wind of the fightback and quickly advocated for our participation in the struggle. He volunteered at the produce distribution where he was able to make conversation with several workers as well as pass out some copies of CHALLENGE.

The following day, in our study-action group, we made a collective commitment to assist in the food distribution while connecting the struggle to other fights going on currently in the city, from Covid-19 breakouts in schools, to closing hospitals, to racist deportations and police terror. It's essential to see all of these assaults as part and parcel of capitalism's need to divide and exploit the working class.

Pandemic's effects on hunger

It is no coincidence that this attack comes during a pandemic that has destroyed food stability worldwide. Almost 15 percent of U.S. households and 18 percent with children reported food insecurity early in the pandemic (Nutrition Journal, 8/31/20). Nearly four in 10 Black and Latin homes with children have struggled to feed their families during the Covid-19 rampage. The percentages of families considered food insecure have surged among workers, already having surpassed the 2008-09 Great Recession numbers (Politico, 7/6/20).

The pandemic also caused a spike in global hunger, with 2.3 billion people now lacking year round access to adequate food (U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, 9/12). Just as the liberal rulers convened to stake out their hollow plans to tackle climate change in the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference this past week, at least four countries—including Yemen, Madagascar, South Sudan, and Ethiopia—are already experiencing famine-like conditions, with both Covid-19 and climate change compounding things, especially for Yemen (OXFAM, 8/4/20, see editorial). The ruling class not only enables this suffering, but tremendously profits from it (CBS News, 3/31).

Plant the seeds of communist revolution

Time and time again, we see the bosses and their capitalist system horrifically fail our class, but as workers we always step up to look out and provide for one another. With every capitalist-caused climate disaster or health epidemic, the selfless and inherently communist character of the working class rises to the forefront in solidarity.

But as noble as these actions may be, alone they will never bring about the world we need and deserve. In order to establish a world that puts the well-being of the international working class above all else, it's necessary to violently seize state power from the bosses through revolution. The capitalists waste millions of tons of food every year while workers starve, only because they can't make a profit off it, just like Aldi. Under communism, we will draw from science and the examples of past revolutions in Russia and China that collectivized food production and distribution in order to end malnutrition and starvation.

No capitalist-funded non-profit group will ever advocate for this! As we fight to feed ourselves today, let's keep planting the seeds of a communist world that will one day ensure that no worker goes without.✪

Pakistan: bosses leave us penniless, fightback persists

PAKISTAN, November 17—The working class is under severe attack in Pakistan. This crisis is a crisis of capitalism, a system that will not save our class, only communist revolution will.

The Pakistani bosses were sinking in 2019 as their profits from exports dropped because of competition from even lower wage countries (The Diplomat, 4/18/2019). They begged the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to save them. Now the Pakistani bosses are making the working class pay their debt.

The desperation is widespread. Fuel prices have increased 47 percent in the last year as part of a deal the Pakistani bosses cut with the IMF to raise prices in exchange for a massive bailout of the Pakistani ruling class (DW.com, 11/15).

The gas price increase has driven up prices of basic food items as well as most necessities. The official inflation rate is twice what it was in 2018, but the actual rate is much higher as businesses are closing and wages for the poorest workers are less than they were in 1991 (Tribune.com.pk, 11/16).

Yet, the working class continues to fight back. People are on the streets chanting against the ruling class and the capitalist system. There have been large demonstrations against the deteriorating conditions. A dynamic contingent of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members have joined the fightback, countering dead-end electoral politics and nationalism with communist politics.

Capitalist crisis leads to rising fascism

As the crisis deepens, the ruling class is increasing fascist attacks against both their enemies from competing factions and against the working class. State oppression is the worst it's been in the history of this country. Social media and the mainstream media are under tight control. People are being tortured, kidnapped and killed in various parts of the country if they speak out against state oppression or exploitation.

Communists or others with radical ideas against capitalism are declared to be enemies of the State. Talking against exploitation, inequality, injustice, fundamentalism and poverty is considered anti-state, which means many workers risk imprisonment or disappearance. Truth has to be fought for and we are struggling to prevail. The Judiciary, Parliament and other institutions of the state are focused on jailing political organizers.

Pakistani bosses sell working class to IMF

Price hikes are making the lives of the working class miserable but bosses are giving a nonsense excuse that prices are going up all over the world because of Covid-19 and restrictions on air traffic. When capitalism is in crisis, it is workers that bear the brunt of exploitation. The annual inflation rate is at its highest this decade, almost 20 percent, which results in increased prices all over the country. The bosses' political parties are not organizing demonstrations against these price hikes, but rather are just maneuvering to try to get themselves to the table with the IMF.

Political parties in Pakistan are led by capitalist lackeys, so they are not concerned about inflation but they desperately want to get power by any means. Bourgeois parties are just talking about inflation and trying to mislead the masses by blaming only the party in power. These misleaders are hiding the fact that capitalism is to blame. These capitalist parties are not allowing workers to participate in strikes or sit-ins organized by students and workers.

The official and self-proclaimed left wing in Pakistan is just serving the bosses while praising socialism. They pretend to be progressive but in fact they are not. They are reactionary and reformist. They use every backward idea i.e, tribalism, racism, ethnicity, sectarianism and nationalism to bring people close to them, just as we would expect from bosses.

The future is in fighting back and communist revolution

Workers, students, and professional organizations are demonstrating all over the country against inflation and ruling class lies and crimes. Comrades and friends of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) are participating in the demonstrations with anti-imperialist, pro-worker and communist chants and politics. Our comrades are condemning the capitalist system publicly by recounting its cruelties and holding the bosses accountable. Comrades are fighting for a system based on "from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs." That is communism! Our communist thoughts are being criticized by so-called progressives as well as liberals and capitalists because they know that our line is a true threat to capitalist society.

We are involved in organizing protests, strikes and sit-ins against poverty, homelessness, exploitation and unemployment. Our young comrades are leading the demonstrations in some places. Our comrades involved in professional organizations are trying to unite the struggle of the different segments of society against the capitalist evils. We are striving in difficult situations to bring more people under the red flag of our international revolutionary communist party—PLP!✪

Revolutionaries never retire: PL'ers fight for-profit healthcare plan

Under capitalism, workers are a commodity whose only value is determined by the bosses, based on their ability to create wealth for capitalists. As a worker becomes seemingly less "profitable" to the ruling class their value dwindles in the eyes of capitalism, leaving many older workers unsupported. But Progressive Labor Party (PLP) "retirees" are fighting back! In the face of an insurance merger that is hanging working class folks out to dry, we are loudly calling out this racist, capitalist, for profit system and demanding healthcare the communist way: to each according to need!

In many parts of the world, working people get medical treatments only if they can pay for them. Older workers who no longer produce wealth for the bosses are left to die in poverty. Retired New York City (NYC) workers are currently facing these facts of capitalist exploitation as a new health insurance plan is in the works, promoted by the city and union bosses.

The new plan "promises" "cost savings" for the same or better care. Retirees are up in arms. They fear the exact opposite: higher costs and worsening care. Moreover, lower income retirees, mainly Black, Latin and women workers will be the most severely affected. That's capitalism. Profits for the capitalists off the backs of "savings" from the workers, with a large dose of racism. The whole capitalist system has to go.

The Municipal Labor Council, a coalition of city worker unions, and the city's political bosses are contracting our health insurance coverage to a private, for profit, insurance company. This will mean higher premiums for those of us who want to continue with our current insurance. For those of us who accept the new plan there is the potential reduction of care and fewer choices of health care providers. Meanwhile, profits will be guaranteed to the new insurance monolith, a merger of Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Emblem Health.

Retirees are not giving in without a fight. When we found out about the deal that the Municipal Labor Council (MLC) and New York City were planning, all hell broke out. Retired PLP members, active in retiree groups, were part of the struggle from the beginning. Campaigns began to inform retirees of what was happening behind closed doors.

First, angry seniors circulated an online petition to stop the MLC from continuing its bargaining with the city. Over 27,000 signed on. Demonstrations were held at City Hall and at union headquarters. Politicians' offices and union officials were bombarded by angry phone calls. A court case was filed to stop the change of medical coverage. Currently, there is a temporary order stopping the new coverage changeover. Thousands of those affected participated in online meetings to discuss the changes because we couldn't meet in person.

All these actions reflected both the fighting spirit that persists in these older workers but also the ideological hold that bosses' ideas have on us. Some of us think that the union misleaders will win in court or that these hacks will convince New York's liberal politicians to pass some laws helping city workers. But we already have up to six retirement "Tiers" for city workers. Each Tier has been worse than the previous one. Now the City is trying to do the same with our health insurance. Liberal politicians or union functionaries are agents of the racist, finance capitalist bosses who run New York City.

Communists on the other hand present a way forward for our class that will get us off the treadmill of constant struggle to survive this racist exploitative system. As we organize and fight back, we advance communist ideas by circulating, CHALLENGE, building study groups and recruiting to Progressive Labor Party. Building the communist movement is the main way we can guarantee the health of our class and it is a struggle that we continue to commit to year after year. Only under communism does a health care system put the health of the working class first and there are absolutely no profits to be made! Fight for communism!

From Bolshevik Revolution to Striking miners— FIGHT FOR WORKERS POWER!

Continued from page 1

hanging from BlackRock's headquarters and recite the U.S. pledge of allegiance. Following that, he led the crowd in a round of cheers for the killer KKKops in the NYPD. Members of PLP turn their backs on the U.S. flag and all that it stands for. Patriotism

continues to be used to exploit and manipulate working people who have given their lives for the bosses' profit system. PLP only salutes the red flag of international working class solidarity!

This gross display of U.S. patriotism and the strategy behind it reveals the UMWA leadership as the class traitors that they are. They said nothing connecting the recent court injunctions against the miners to the capitalist state. If they had, the need to break the bosses' laws would have become crystal clear. The Alabama miners' strike is an example of the international working class struggle and how the fightback of workers in one place inspires fightback in others. The union leadership not only spits on the memory of the proud history of miners' fightback, their nationalist, pro-KKKop rant pits miners in the U.S. against miners from around the world, who in recent years have fought violent struggles against their own bosses. PL'ers offer the only alternative that is in the miners' and every workers' interest: smashing the bosses' laws and their cops, while fighting back and building PLP!

Smash the racist bosses with multiracial unity and communist revoultion

'Bolshevik Striketober Fest' celebrates workers' power, history

On a mild sunny afternoon two days later, a group of PL'ers and friends held a Bolshevik anniversary event at a public beach in Brooklyn. Two new, young comrades, including a comrade who visited Alabama in August, kicked off the afternoon with a rousing speech connecting the miners' strike in Alabama with the "Striketober'' strike wave around the U.S. and the world.

The PL'ers saluted and gave a roll call to the recent October strike wave of miners across Mexico and Colombia over safety, wages, and the environmental destruction and attacks on workers in these countries and all over the world.

In Colombia, miners halted the exports of over 200,000 tons of coal and cost the bosses $80 billion in profits. These workers and their sisters and brothers in Alabama were joined with strikes, strike authorizations, walk-outs and work stoppages of tens of thousands of workers from Massachusetts to New York, West Virginia, Kentucky, Kansas, Nevada, California, Oregon and Hawaii in industries including steel, agricultural machinery, telecommunications, transit, healthcare, bakeries and whiskey distilleries.

Despite the darkness of the current period, these strike waves show us that every dark night must have its end. In 1917, amid the dark night of the imperialist slaughterhouse called World War I, communists ended the war in Russia and toppled their capitalist government in revolution. Communist workers led by their party waged a multiracial, integrated, revolution of workers from all over the world spreading communist politics in over 135 languages.

As the world's first workers' state, these pioneering communists made many errors which PLP has analyzed elsewhere. However, 104 years after workers first proved victory over capitalism is possible, PLP proudly carries the torch of their legacy into the class struggle against capitalism today. We fight to smash racism, sexism, nationalism, profit systems, and racist borders with a communist world run by and for the international working class. FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM and JOIN US!✪

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

Biden's reforms build for war

The House of Representatives, spearheaded by Democrats, servants of the liberal old money wing of U.S. imperialists, voted to include an immigration provision in Jim Crow Joe Biden's Build Back Better bill. Aside from the fact that the Congressional parliamentarian may exclude the provision, the debate in the Senate, whether the bill passes or not, will further intensify fear, repression, racist scapegoating and exploitation of immigrant workers. What does it all mean?

So-called Plan C will temporarily infuse the capitalist economy with "in chains" low wage workers to fill momentary job shortages, guarantee huge profits for businesses and aid in the liberal strategy to control inflation. The "immigration reform" will position young workers to serve as cannon fodder in the next war. Horrendous fascist conditions at the border will intensify. The provision in the bill is a big fascist attack on the working class, leaving immigrant workers vulnerable to deportation at the end of five to ten years.

The crumbs thrown by these liberal wolves in sheep's clothing are sweet, but are certainly poisoned. Comrades participating in pro-immigrant groups, community groups, unions, schools, etc. need to step up the fight for amnesty as we fight inside the movement facing endless reforms to benefit the capitalists. It's hard to do but we must do it as we sharpen the struggle to unite the working class, men, women, Black, Latin, Asian, white, immigrant, and workers of different backgrounds and sexual orientation. We must redouble our confidence in the working class as we fight against illusions in the bosses' reforms and for the necessity to be in the protracted struggle for communist revolution and workers' power.

★★★★★

PLP parents organize vaccination drive

Communists have the outlook of both organizing against capitalism and building ties in the working class. Many have written about building connections on the job, in unions, and at schools. Parents can also build these ties within the communities of their children by fighting against racism and making the personal political.

Recently Chicago Public Schools (CPS) had a "Vaccine Awareness Day" and school was closed so elementary age children could get vaccinated. But while several private schools on the North Side arranged to have mass vaccination events at their schools for children and parents, almost no Chicago public schools had similar events planned.

In fact, the Chicago Department of Health and Board of Education claimed that school vaccination events hadn't worked in other places and purposely made no effort to create these opportunities.

However, one school that serves 80 percent working-class students and many Spanish-speaking students went ahead anyway under the leadership of a Progressive Labor Party (PLP) parent. We organized a pharmacy to come that day and vaccinate both children and adults. To answer questions and increase knowledge and confidence in the vaccine, we held a Q&A event with a bilingual physician during the week before the event. The day of the event, we brought banners, balloons, snacks, and even got news coverage.

Having this in the neighborhood worked out well—127 people were vaccinated including some neighbors whose children did not attend the public school. Meanwhile at a rich private school, 600 people were vaccinated in one day.

The disparity in Covid-19-related deaths has been well documented now and it appears that CPS and the Chicago Department of Health are more than happy to let that continue. PLP is organizing to change these racist decisions and to build multiracial community power so workers and parents can be in charge the next time and get everyone the care they need.

★★★★★

GLOSSARY

COMMUNIST TERMS

Fascism

Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They use open racism to build a political following.

Book Review

Workers have fought back, will fight back

Continued from page 7

Their collective self-reliance was the other prong of the winning strategy. They realized — as the working class must again today — it is up to us to make change.

Auschwitz rebels betrayed by U.S., British capitalists

In contrast to Sobibor, there was also an escape from Auschwitz. The escapees made their way to the Vatican, contacting the British foreign minister and President Roosevelt to try to convince them to bomb the crematoriums and railroad transport lines. All refused. U.S. Asst. Secretary for War John J. McCoy told the World Jewish Congress:

> *...After a study it became apparent that such an operation could be executed only by the diversion of considerable air support essential to the success of our forces now engaged in decisive operations elsewhere and would in any case be of such doubtful efficacy that it would not warrant the use of our resources* [Encyclopedia Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Why-wasnt-Auschwitz-bombed-717594].

Those death camps functioned with direct Allied knowledge and complicity. Those agents of capital were not interested in saving the lives of the Jewish workers, communists, trade unionists, and others who were in the camps. The Auschwitz rebels' strategy of relying on the bosses for help, waiting and negotiating, cost more lives.

Lessons from Sobibor

When workers rely on themselves, they can win their objectives, but when they rely on the agents of the bourgeoisie, labor union fakers and rotten politicians of every party, they are doomed. This is a key lesson for the international working class in this period of the development of fascism as a worldwide system.

As fascism further develops in the U.S. as they face off against imperialist rivals China and Russia, the camps housing refugees today may serve as prisons for all workers and others who rebel, and we must learn from our class' experiences at Sobibor.

Nazism was defeated by mustering every ounce of working-class heroism during those six years of world war. But although Nazism was defeated, capitalism was not. The imperialists that united with the Soviet Union only until they could defeat their rival imperialists, the German Nazis and Italian fascists, went on to install fascist regimes to murder and terrorize workers across Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia. They still do. More workers have been murdered by the fascist regimes installed and bankrolled by these imperialists than were murdered by the German Nazis, Italian fascists, and their allies during World War II. Many of the refugees braving the horrific journey to the U.S. and EU borders today are fleeing these fascist regimes, and it is the duty of today's communists in the Progressive Labor Party to learn from the past —the victories and mistakes—and finish the job.

World-wide, there are millions of workers who have no intention of being herded into death camps. But the bastard bosses and their two-bit chumps will never be defeated unless we organize now, with the spirit of those fighters at Sobibor, to smash all camps and this entire capitalist system for communist revolution. ✪

Book Review

Workers have fought back, will fight back

We have seen this historically and we continue to see this at racist borders today: concentration camps and genocide are an integral part of the political economy of the capitalist system, and every capitalist imperialist power. From the extermination campaigns against indigenous workers who lived in what is now North America to the U.S. encampment of thousands of Japanese-Americans during World War II, these bloody stains on the U.S. are buried, obscured, and even warped into tortured apologies by the bosses' media. Today, as the U.S. bosses imprison thousands upon thousands of refugees from Haiti and Latin America in camps, it's not enough that we learn and gain awareness of these atrocities against the working class. We must fight back.

It's up to workers to arm ourselves with the rich and militant history of workers' fightback. Over a half century ago, author Yuri Suhl did just that, and wrote a history of fightback and rebellion within one of the darkest periods of working class history. For communists, Suhl's *They Fought Back* serves as a manual containing lessons for how workers, staring down the face of brutal oppression, can join fists and fight back.

Fascist capitalism can be defeated

In 1967, Yuri Suhl compiled accounts of resistance to Nazism during World War II. His purpose was to dispel the myth that Jewish workers in Europe were passive and never fought back against the Nazi fascists. Most of the accounts are of lesser-known events and resistance leaders. These are honest, and although written from a nationalist perspective, Suhl and the authors highlight communist and rank-and-file leadership.

The account by Alexander Pechersky, a Red Army commander who led a revolt at the Sobibor death camp, is worth retelling. It shows how even in the most desperate situation, with confidence in the working class and a strong political base, the fascists can be taken, even from within their strongholds.

The Sobibor camp in eastern Poland was the final destination for Jewish deportees from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Holland, France, Austria, and later the Soviet Union. The Nazis murdered them at the rate of 15,000 a day. Those who remained labored from five in the morning to eight pm, barely surviving on bread and moldy barley. Typhus was rampant, and the Nazi guards immediately executed those who contracted it. The guards systematically beat the workers with whips and forced them to count their own lashes. For the rest, the children, the old and most women, there was no work, only death.

Red Army Lieutenant Pechersky arrived at Sobibor in September, 1943, from Minsk, the first transport from the Soviet Union. He and 80 other men were spared from the ovens; the others were never seen again. Initially he suffered severe depression and nightmares, but quickly moved past that to begin escape plans and base building.

The Nazis conducted massive executions in retaliation for attempted escapes. Pechersky reasoned that everyone must escape and relied on the workers there to make that escape possible. He allied himself with two young workers, one of whose father was a communist, who helped him to organize political discussions in the barracks, which he describes:

> *For those who did not understand Russian, Shloime translated into Yiddish. They translated for each other into German and Dutch ... The barracks dwellers sat on the lower bunks together with the "Easterners" (that's how we who came from the Soviet Union were called by the camp inmates). They were hungry, exhausted from hard labor, their bodies bruised from the whippings; they were doomed to death. However, it sufficed to have a brief rest, a few peaceful moments, and one's spirit rose again. Especially here, in the company of women, backs straightened out, eyes sparkled, laughter was heard, and wherever you turned, a lively discussion was in progress. And what were they discussing here? They talked about the war and its prospects; about countries and cities; about science and technology; about the theater; music, and literature; about the contradictions in human nature and about the future of humanity; here they sang, cried, and kissed; here the feelings of love and jealousy came into play; all the emotions that set the human heart aglow and quickened its pulse beat found expression here. (pp. 20, 22)*

Most striking was Pechersky's lack of cynicism. He had every "objective" reason for feeling despair, and yet he did not. Despite everything, many imprisoned workers continued to believe Hitler's lie that their lives would be saved, and this gave rise to defeatist ideas borne of fear. While capitalism exists there will always be some workers who feel this way, a lesson for us to always keep in mind.

Pechersky's List

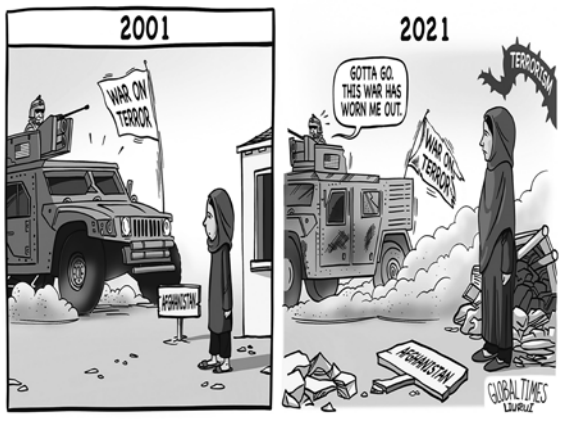
In the 1990s, a blockbuster Hollywood film, Schindler's List, glorified a Nazi officer and capitalist who felt sympathy for his Jewish prisoners being sent to slaughter. Working within the Nazi system through bribes, he made a list of those to save by working in factories he ran, with the helpless Jewish prisoners having little agency in their future. In stark contrast to this passivity, at Sobibor, "Pechersky's list" included thirteen leading Nazi officers assassinated in advance with axes and knives secretly made by the Red Army and Jewish prisoners. They also determined that any imprisoned workers who betrayed them would be killed. Before and during this revolt, carefully planned tunnels were dug, guns were taken from the dead Nazis, and telephone lines cut.

During the revolt in October 1943, all 600 inmates made a break for freedom. About 400 succeeded in breaking out of the camp, but about half of these were killed by landmines. Pursued by aircraft, the SS (Nazi soldiers), police, and thousands of troops, some were killed. Polish fascists killed yet more – these were the anticommunist Armija Krajowa, the "national army" of the anticommunist and anti-Semitic Polish "government in exile" in London, who are "heroes" in today's capitalist Poland. Still, some managed to elude their pursuers, and Pechersky's group of 60 men and women succeeded in making contact with Soviet "partisans," or communist guerillas.

Before the revolt, in one of Alexander Pechersky's barracks discussions, he was peppered with questions about liberation and the state of the war. One person asked, "If there are so many partisans, why don't they attack our camp?" Pechersky replied, "The partisans have their tasks. No one can do our work for us." The workers were excited by that idea and embraced it.

Continued on page 6

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .



Russia is also a threat to U.S. imperialism

Foreign Affairs, Nov/Dec–The Biden administration came into office with a clear and unambiguous foreign policy priority: countering a rising China. The question of how to deal with Russia, by contrast, has taken a back seat… Joe Biden declared that Russia was "sitting on top of an economy that has nuclear weapons and oil wells and nothing else." But the case for Russian decline is overstated. Putin's foreign policy enjoys widespread support among the country's ruling elite…Russia is the main energy supplier to the European Union, …the EU gets 41 percent of its natural gas, 27 percent of its oil, and 47 percent of its solid fossil fuels from Russia.

Russia remains the United States' primary peer in nuclear weapons technology. Aside from NATO, it also fields the strongest conventional military in Europe…Today, the Russian military is at its highest level of readiness, mobility, and technical capability in decades.

Tunisian president Saied plays imperialists against one another

Brookings, 11/10–Western countries have been relatively timid in their response to Tunisian President Kais Saied's power grab…Part of the hesitance is fear over what might happen if the West pressures Saied more forcefully — that Saied might turn instead to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates for foreign assistance. At this stage, Tunisia appears to be courting both the Gulf and the IMF (International Monetary Fund).

Egypt's Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi received $12 billion in Gulf funding in the wake of his 2013 coup, yet still courted and received an IMF loan by 2016. In Tunisia as well, it is unlikely that the Gulf can solve the country's economic woes forever – even if they happen to patch up the budget deficit this year, Tunisia will eventually go back to the IMF. With the Gulf bogged down in supporting counter-revolutionary forces in Egypt, Libya, and Sudan, that return may come sooner rather than later. Knowing that, the West should double down on its pressure for democracy and dialogue, not abandon it.

Yet another way for capitalists to avoid paying taxes

Forbes, 11/11– Elon Musk promised to sell 10% of his Tesla stake after 58% of people voted in a Twitter poll shared by the Tesla CEO. Tesla's stock has risen over 13,000% since his last sale, and Musk is now worth an estimated $281 billion. When the world's richest man wants cash, he can simply borrow money by putting up—or pledging—some of his Tesla shares as collateral for lines of credit, instead of selling shares and paying capital gains taxes. These pledged shares serve as an evergreen credit facility, giving Musk access to cash when he needs it. Musk currently has pledged 88.3 million Tesla shares, nearly 36.2% of his overall stake, as of Wednesday worth more than $94 billion.

Larry Ellison, Oracle's cofounder…boasts a fortune of over $100 billion…Since 2018, he has increased the number of his pledged Oracle shares… worth about $28 billion. Ellison did not sell any Oracle shares between December 2010 and June 2020…but splashed $300 million in 2012 to buy the Hawaiian island of Lanai and…on opulent mansions, growing a $1 billion real estate portfolio.

Catalytic converters fuel new drug trade in Democratic Republic of Congo

Der Spiegel, 10/14– The images showed people completely motionless, or moving only slowly – and investigators quickly figured out what it was: a new drug by the name of bombé: deposits and substances from catalytic converters, all of which has been scraped out of old cars and then processed into a drug. "We aren't worried about it," they say. "Bombé helps us forget everything…With bombé everything is easier." One of the users says it's like a veil lying over you.

Kinshasa is among the most expensive cities in the world…There are many super-rich residents, who drive through the wide streets of the business district in giant SUVs. At the same time, though, the economy is in shambles, the country's raw materials wealth reaches only a small elite and there is barely a middle class.

Astroworld "Travis"-ty shows the only antidote is communist revolution

As the capitalist world becomes more volatile, the world of entertainment cannot escape the instability it produces. In fact, bosses use culture as a key arena for keeping workers distracted from the source of our problems. The November 5 pandemonium at hip hop artist Travis Scott's Astroworld Music Festival killed 10 young people. This event gives workers yet another reason to see that only a society led by and for workers—where money does not exist—can prevent such needless tragedies from occurring in the future.

Profit-driven greed from the concert's Live Nation promoters. Fascist "crowd control" tactics from Houston, Texas police. A megalomaniac mindset on the part of Travis Scott himself and the cult-of-personality worship on the part of concert participants. High levels of drug and alcohol-induced violence–in the midst of the pandemic. These factors all culminated in the literal crushing to death and murder of these young people and critical injuries to countless others.

Under communism, we too will hold large festivals and enjoy the culture of our youth, but we will not promote antisocial culture or risk the health and safety of our youth's lives all for the sake of preserving a profit-based system of inequality.

"Live Nation" is a profit-hungry death trap

While everyone points fingers at other sources for who is to "blame," it is the capitalist system itself which must be put on trial. The drive for maximizing profits at the expense of workers' lives is, once again, at the core of this tragedy. Live Nation, the official concert organizer for Astroworld, accumulated over $2 billion dollars from the week of festival events. They sold more than 100,000 tickets within minutes even though the plan was for 50,000 (They wanted the extra cash). Live Nation has had a long standing history of safety violations, including a previous Astroworld disaster in 2019 where three people were injured in a stampede; 200 deaths and 750 injuries have been connected to Live Nation since 2006. This is a disgusting example of capitalism prioritizing profit over the lives and well being of workers. Travis Scott himself reportedly made $65 million from the event (Yahoo, 11/10). While it is just speculation, some believe Scott to be making money off the back end in the wake of these deaths as well by promoting

Betterhelp.com, an online therapy network that has been accused in the past of utilizing celebrities to promote a substandard mental health service for vulnerable youth (The Atlantic, 10/ 12/18).

Travis Scott: proof that cult-of-personality hurts our class

While the profit motive is a constant, bosses also need the political ideologies of individualism and cynical passivity put forward by musicians like Travis Scott, so this is another way in which the Astroworld concert proves that our youth deserve better. Scott has had a history of inciting violence at his concerts. In 2015, he was arrested at Lollapalooza for encouraging his fans to 'rush the stage'. In 2017, he encouraged a fan to jump off a stage. His 2018 song 'STARGAZING' contains the lyrics 'It ain't a mosh pit if it ain't no injuries, I got them stagedivin' out of nosebleeds.'

While hundreds of thousands of brave young people took to the streets during the pandemic to stand up against racist police brutality, Scott made disparaging remarks about Trayvon Martin and Mike Brown, calling Black workers who protested their deaths 'fake activists'. Bosses love and promote this kind of anti-working class cynicism, and Scott was rewarded generously for his beliefs, being allowed a mass concert even as Covid-19 rages for workers across the world. Cited as 'Corporate America's Go-To-Pitchman', Scott's many endorsements include McDonald's, Nike, and Sony, accumulating over 100 million dollars from these endeavors. This is how the ruling class tries to indoctrinate the youth into buying into the individualist, bourgeois lifestyle, instead of learning the power of class consciousness and organizing a strong working class.

Let's rage against capitalism, not each other

During this Covid-19 pandemic, where millions have died, capitalists have shown that profits matter more than the well being of workers. The idea of 'going back to normal' despite being in year two of the pandemic, where workers have died or have lost loved ones, faced unemployment and homelessness, has shown young people that capitalism will never place the importance of the workers first. Young people have experienced or witnessed the contradictions of capitalism during this pandemic and are embittered and disillusioned by a system that offers them no hope or solution.

Very few entertainers command the cross-section of racially and ethnically diverse fans of Travis Scott, but this multiracial would-be army of young people is aligned behind a cultural force that weakens rather than strengthens the fans themselves and their working class brothers and sisters. The rage of these young fans is produced by capitalist alienation, unemployment, inadequate education, overconsumption of drugs, and racist and sexist ideas. These fans for the most part have not been exposed to communist ideas that would allow them, like so many youth before them, to apply their anger toward the overthrow of capitalist exploitation. That's why a communist revolution is needed.

PLP fights for true youth power

Many of the fans broke away from the raging, toxic scene by taking action to save lives and stop the viciousness that was taking place that night. Several young people mounted the cameramen's stands to redirect their attention to the tragedies only feet away, but the cameramen were paid to literally turn a "blind eye" from everything except Scott himself. Hundreds broke from Travis's blind following and chanted "stop the show." Many others rescued people who were being crushed and suffocated by breaking the rules and throwing them over the gates into the so-called "VIP" section where $1,000 ticket holders were secured from much of the mayhem. And this is just a minor reflection of how young people all over the world have sacrificed their lives in the fight to end capitalist oppression.

Every movement in the past 100 years to abolish racist inequality and capitalism in general has seen tremendous youth leadership. The Soweto uprisings in South Africa against racist aparatheid had the participation of over 20,000 young people, with over 170 killed in the monumental June 16 protest of 1976 that was a turning point in the fight against racism there. In Cuba, the July 26 movement to overthrow the U.S.-based Batista fascist regime was not only led by the relatively young Castro brothers and Che Guevara, but there were also hundreds of young people–literacy teachers, party members, singers, militia members–who went on to make their deeply flawed but still significant effort toward communism come to life. During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, in spite of tremendous political errors, one of the greatest achievements was the decision of the Communist Party to place China's working-class youth in charge of the schools, factories and many other sectors of the socialist society.

College students in Haiti have led workers in Haiti since the Great Depression of the 1930s, and in recent years they were the first to take to the streets time and again in the aftermath of the massive natural disasters since 2010 and incessant government destabilization that costs the lives of workers every day. Our Progressive Labor Party fights to keep alive the courage and selflessness of revolutionaries past, placing young and invigorating people at the front of our annual May Day marches down Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn, every year. Young people have led our summer projects against racist police brutality. Young people write for our newspaper. PLP strives to be the place for young people to grow up to be communist leaders. ✪

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